

Israel's Holy Days

The Feasts of Israel are a reminder of the incredible order of the universe as designed by God.

The children of Israel knew that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is a God of salvation. Therefore, the Holy Days and festivals have deep spiritual meaning—a meaning that finds its fulfillment in the life and ministry of Jesus the Messiah.



Believer's Application:

Traditions and Observances:

Messianic Fulfillment:

Holy Day:

Scriptural Basis:

Time Observed:

Purpose:

Rosh Hashanah	Yom Kippur	Sukkot	Purim	Pesach	Ha-Matzot	Shavuot	Hanukkah
The Jewish New Year	The Day of Atonement	The Feast of Tabernacles	Literally "Lots" — Celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people from the wicked Haman while in exile in Persia	Passover	Unleavened Bread	Feast of Weeks, Pentecost	Feast of Dedication
Literally "The head of the year;" according to Jewish tradition, the beginning of the civil year	The most sacred day of the Jewish year	The last of the seven major festivals detailed in Scripture					
Leviticus 23:23-25, Numbers 29:1-6	Leviticus 16, 23:26-32, Numbers 29:7-11	Leviticus 23:33-36,39-43, Numbers 29:12-34	The Book of Esther	Deut. 16:1-8 Leviticus 23:5	Deuteronomy 16:1-8 Leviticus 23:6-8	Deuteronomy 16:9-12 Leviticus 23:15-21	mentioned in John 10; not in Old Testament
First day of Tishrei – celebrated as two days (September/October)	10th of Tishrei (September/October)	Begins on the 15th of Tishrei;* lasts seven days; ends with two additional holidays: Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah (September/October)	14th of Adar (February/March)	14th of Nisan* (March/April)	15th of Nisan - lasts seven days (March/April)	Begins fifty days after Passover* (May/June)	25th day of Kislev – eight days (December)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws attention to the seventh month. • Prepares Israel for the Day of Atonement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides atonement for the sins of the nation of Israel • Teaches Israel the scope of God's forgiveness through the offering of the scapegoat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminds Israel of God's provision throughout the wilderness wanderings • Reminds Israel of God's faithfulness through the cycle of harvests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminds us of God's providence for Israel and His supernatural intervention through the obedience of His servants • Commemorates God's miraculous delivery of His people from destruction by the evil Haman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrates the Exodus of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemorates the use of unleavened bread at Passover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering of two loaves of leavened bread—the fruit of the sheaf offered on First Fruits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemorates Israel's victory over military forces of Antiochus Epiphanes in 164 BC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blowing the shofar • All day synagogue worship • Eating honey cake, apples and honey (hope for a sweet year) • Begins ten days of repentance prior to Yom Kippur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full day's fast • All day spent in synagogue • Chanting of <i>Kol Nidre</i> (release from all vows) • Making peace with those offended throughout the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building of booths decorated with art and hanging fruit • Most observant Jewish people eat in booths for seven days • Waving of <i>lulav</i> (branches of three trees woven together) and <i>etrog</i> (large lemon-like fruit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading of the <i>Megillah</i> (Scroll of Esther) • Wearing costumes and performing skits • Sending of gifts and food • Special food – <i>hamantaschen</i>, (Haman's Hat)—a delicious three-cornered pastry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passover Seder is celebrated on first two evenings with readings from the book of Exodus and Psalms • Special prayers • Special food • Special music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for and removing leaven from the home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decoration of home and synagogue with greens • Intense study and discussion of the Law • Reading of the Book of Ruth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting of the Hanukkah candles • Spinning of the <i>dreidel</i> (toy top) • Giving of gifts • Special food such as <i>latkes</i> (potato pancakes) and chocolate coins
The return of the Lord. <i>"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God..."</i> (1 Thessalonians 4:16)	Jesus our High Priest offered a sacrifice for sin once for all—the fulfillment of the Yom Kippur offering. <i>"And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified"</i> (Hebrews 10:11-14)	The Water Drawing: Jesus is the living water that satisfies. <i>"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified"</i> (John 7:37-39) The Illumination of the Temple: <i>"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life'"</i> (John 8:12)	Although Purim is not mentioned in the New Testament, God's provision in Messiah is the ultimate intervention in human affairs 	The blood of Jesus the Messiah fulfills, once and for all, the innocent sacrifice of the Passover Lamb. <i>"For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"</i> (Matthew 26:28)	Leaven in the Scriptures is a symbol of sin: <i>"Then He charged them, saying, 'Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod'"</i> (Mark 8:15) 	The Holy Spirit fell on the day of Pentecost, or Shavuot (Acts 2:1-4) Rabbinic tradition says the Law was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai on Shavuot 	<i>"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life"</i> (John 8:12).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual renewal comes through daily repentance. Listen for the call of the Lord—be prepared for the return of the Messiah (1 John 3:2-3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The death of Jesus tears down the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies (Hebrews 10:19-20) • We are forgiven and have access to God as never before (Romans 5:1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festival will be observed in the Kingdom (Zechariah 14:16-19) • Points to the day when the presence of God will tabernacle with humanity forever (Revelation 21:3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust in the Lord in adversity: <i>"You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ...do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak"</i> (Matthew 10:18-19) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The blood of Jesus cleanses believers from sin in the sight of God (Hebrews 9:14) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must be careful of how we live in this world—in obedience to God, and not as the rest of the world lives (1 Corinthians 5:7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish and Gentile believers are one; the harvest of the one sheaf—Jesus the Messiah—so we should live together in unity (Psalm 133:1, Ephesians 3:6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The light of the Lord that is in us is meant to shine forth as we live for Him.

*one day according to Scripture, but observed for two days outside of Israel